

Attorney Docket No. P12541-US1
Customer Number 27045

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 1, 5-9, 11, 12, 15, 17-22, and 24-27. Claims 2-4, 13, 14, and 16 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1, 5-12, 15, and 17-27 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge the conditional allowance of claims 4, 11, 14, and 16-21. The Examiner objected to these claims for depending from rejected base claims, but stated they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and to overcome the rejections under § 112, second paragraph.

As noted below, the Applicants have reviewed and amended all of the claims where necessary to correct the § 112 problems.

Claim 4 depended from base claim 1 and intervening claims 2 and 3. The Applicants have incorporated the limitations of claims 2-4 into base claim 1 and canceled claims 2-4. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 5-10 depend from allowable claim 1. Therefore, the allowance of claims 5-10 is respectfully requested.

Claim 11 incorrectly depended from base claim 1 and intervening claims 2, [sic], 9, and 10. Claim 11 correctly depended from base claim 1 and intervening claims 2, 3, 9, and 10. The Applicants have rewritten claim 11 in independent form to include the limitations of claims 2, 3, and 9. The limitation of claim 10 was not seen to be essential to the allowance of claim 11, and was therefore omitted. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 11 is respectfully requested.

Claim 14 depended from base claim 12. The Applicants have incorporated the limitations of claim 14 into base claim 12 and canceled claim 14. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 12 is respectfully requested.

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Claim 16 depended from base claim 15. The Applicants have incorporated the limitations of claim 16 into base claim 15, and canceled claim 16. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 15 is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-23 depend from allowable claim 15. Therefore, the allowance of claims 17-23 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 24 is a system claim corresponding to allowable method claim 1. Claim 24 has been amended in a similar manner to include apparatus-type limitations equivalent to method claims 2-4. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 24 is respectfully requested.

Likewise, independent claim 26 is a computer program product claim corresponding to allowable method claim 1. Claim 26 has been amended in a similar manner to include limitations equivalent to method claims 2-4. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 26 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 25 is a system claim corresponding to allowable method claim 12. Claim 25 has been amended in a similar manner to include apparatus-type limitations equivalent to method claim 14. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 25 is respectfully requested.

Likewise, independent claim 27 is a computer program product claim corresponding to allowable method claim 12. Claim 27 has been amended in a similar manner to include limitations equivalent to method claim 14. Therefore, the allowance of amended claim 27 is respectfully requested.

3.) Examiner Objections - Claims

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 3 because of informalities. The Applicants have corrected the informalities as suggested by the Examiner in amended claim 1, in which claim 3 has been incorporated. Therefore, the withdrawal of the objection to claim 3 is respectfully requested.

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4.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

In paragraphs 3-4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner pointed out various problems with antecedent basis. The Applicants have reviewed and amended all of the claims where necessary to more distinctly claim the invention and correct the antecedent basis problems. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 112 rejection is respectfully requested.

5.) Information Disclosure Statements

The Examiner objected to the IDSs filed on 11/19/2002 and 01/30/2004. Apparently, the Examiner did not receive the Form-1449s and cited references, which were mailed by the Applicants and acknowledged by the USPTO mailroom. Additional copies are enclosed herewith. Consideration of the previously filed references is respectfully requested.

6.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In paragraphs 6-7 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 6-7, 12, 15 and 24-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin, et al. (US 6,377,546) in view of Lyles, et al. (US 5,917,822). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 9, 13 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin and Lyles and further in view of Gubbi, et al. (US 6,865,609). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 10 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin, Lyles in view of Dravida, et al. (US 2004/0019876). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form

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as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 10 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin and Lyles and further in view of Nattkemper, et al. (US 6,754,206). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 11 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin, Lyles and Nattkemper, further in view of Malmlof (US 6,594,241). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In paragraph 12 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guerin, Lyles, Nattkemper, further in view of Gilbertson, et al. (US 6,260,099). The Applicants have amended the claims into allowable form as discussed above under Allowable Subject Matter. Therefore, the withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

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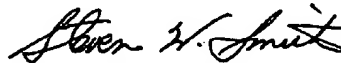
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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1, 5-12, 15, and 17-27.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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